



Thinking about taking a drone to Antarctica?

Thinking about taking a drone to Antarctica? The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators has announced robust new restrictions Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) use in Antarctica.

The constraints, voted in at IAATO's annual meeting in Cape Town, South Africa (April 30 – May 3), mean those using Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) for commercial purposes on IAATO vessels will have new restrictions limiting piloting opportunities.

The recreational use of RPAS is already banned in coastal areas of Antarctica, but IAATO members agreed that for the 2019-20 season, commercial RPAS flights are not allowed in coastal areas unless the activity is covered by the IAATO Operator's permit/authorization and/or the RPAS pilot has approval from the IAATO Operator with whom they are traveling, regardless of any personal authorization they may have.

The Antarctic Treaty Parties, and IAATO members, are concerned about the use of RPAS in Antarctica; while there are situations where flying them may be of value with regards to science, ice reconnaissance for vessel navigation and education, including documentary film making, there are many questions still to be answered in terms of their potential impact on the environment.

IAATO has worked for 28 years, advocating and promoting safe and environmentally responsible tourism in Antarctica and our core mission is to offer visitors an enriching and educational expedition, while only having a minor or transitory impact. Drone flights in Antarctica, come with risks; from lower temperatures making battery life difficult to gauge, to how these devices may be inadvertently affecting wildlife behaviour.

If you have any questions about using a drone in Antarctica, speak to your tour operator.

About IAATO

IAATO is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic. IAATO Members work



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together to develop, adopt and implement operational standards that mitigate potential environmental impacts. These standards have proved to be successful including but are not limited to: Antarctic site-specific guidelines, site selection criteria, passenger to staff ratios, limiting numbers of passengers ashore, boot washing guidelines and the prevention of the transmission of alien organisms, wilderness etiquette, ship scheduling and vessel communication procedures, emergency medical evacuation procedures, emergency contingency plans, reporting procedures, marine wildlife watching guidelines, station visitation policies and much more. IAATO has a global network of over 100 members.